

January  
2018

# MONTHLY DATA REPORT



Consumer  
Protection and  
Enforcement  
Division  
California Public  
Utilities Commission



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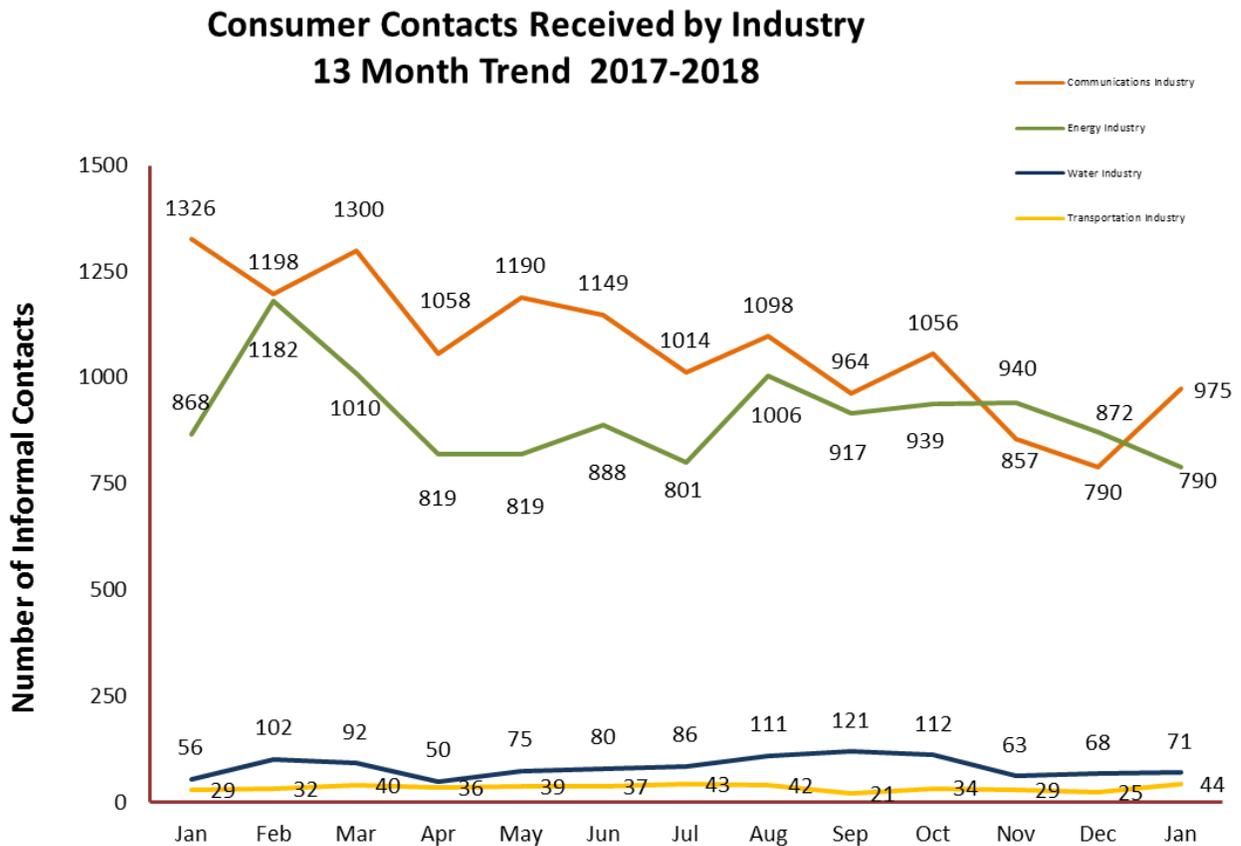
The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED) serves the public interest and the mission of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) by assisting consumers in resolving their informal complaints against service providers under the Commission's jurisdiction. CPED is proud to be able to assist consumers with an informal complaint resolution process, with answers to questions, and with referral information. In assisting consumers, we are able to gain a useful picture of consumer issues and trends.

This report is based on contacts (informal complaints and questions) received by the Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) and the Transportation Enforcement Branch (TEB) within CPED, and presents both annual and monthly data for the communications, energy, water, and transportation industries. Page 2 presents annual trend data, and Page 3 through Page 6 report data by industry for the current month. For context, the report also includes comparable data from the previous month. Page 7 presents contact data specifically related to safety concerns, by industry. A glossary of terms used in this report can be found on Page 8.

The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division serves as the first line of support for consumers of CPUC-regulated services. CPED collects and resolves consumer informal complaints, enforces laws and regulations governing transportation carriers, and investigates allegations of utility waste, fraud, and abuse.

# Overview

1,880 CONTACTS (January 2018)



Overall, 1,880 total informal consumer contacts were received during January 2018 across the four regulated industries. January shows an increase of approximately 7% from the 1,755 informal contacts received during December 2017; and an 11% decrease from the prior 12-month average of 2,124.

**Communications:** 975 categorized informal contacts related to Communications were received during January 2018, which is an increase of 23% from the 790 contacts received during December 2017. The contacts received during January experienced a 10% decrease compared to the prior 12-month average of 1,083.

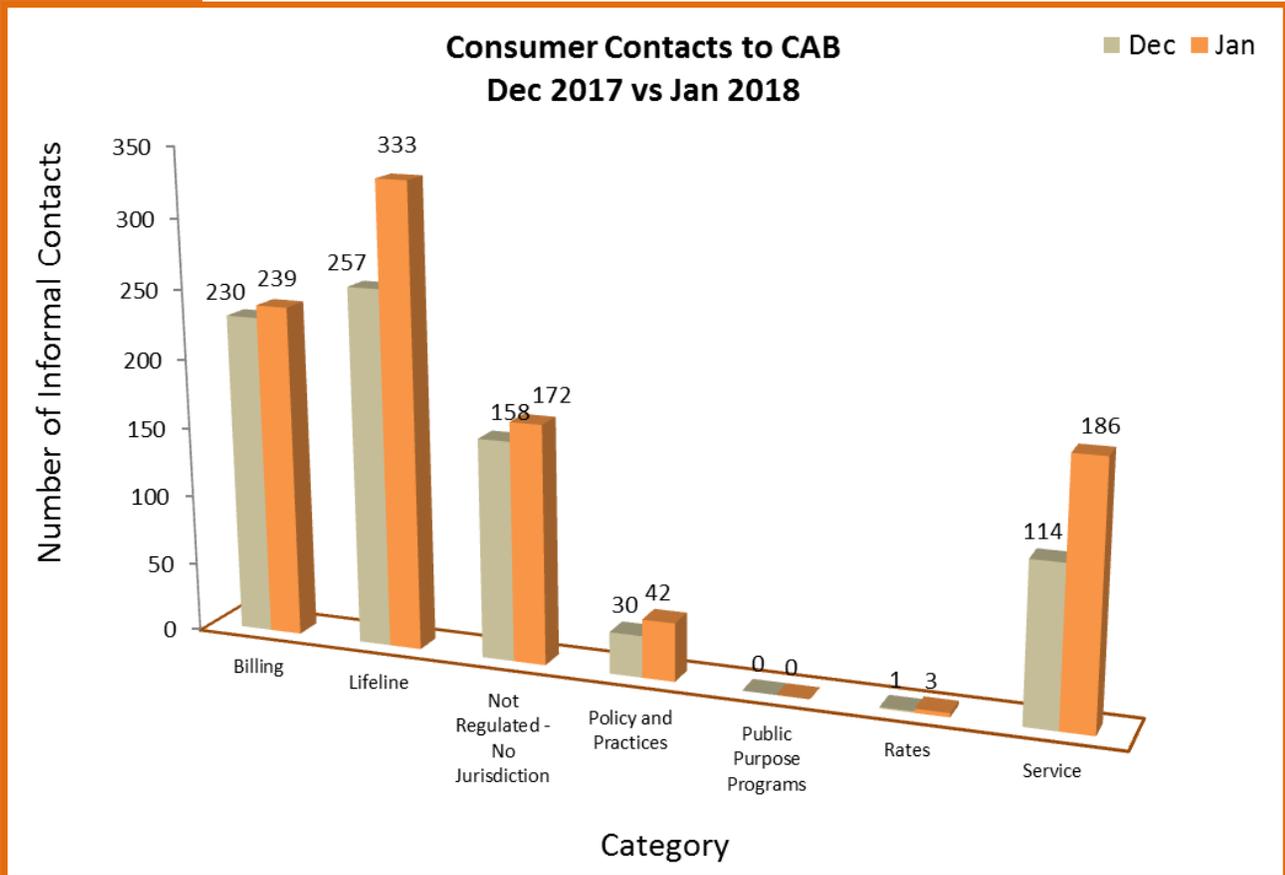
**Energy:** 790 categorized informal contacts related to Energy were received during January 2018, which is a decrease of 9% from 872 contacts received during December 2017. Contacts received in January are 14% lower than the prior 12-month average of 922.

**Water:** 71 categorized informal contacts related to Water were received during January 2018. This is a 4% increase from the 68 contacts received in December 2017. Water contacts went to below average with January being 16% lower than the prior 12-month average of 85.

**Transportation:** 44 Transportation-related contacts were received during January 2018. This is 76% Increase from 25 contacts received in December 2017. Transportation contacts are 30% higher than the prior 12 month average of 34.

# Communications

975 CONTACTS (January 2018)



During January 2018, CAB received 975 Communications-related informal contacts, allocated into one of the defined categories of Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service.

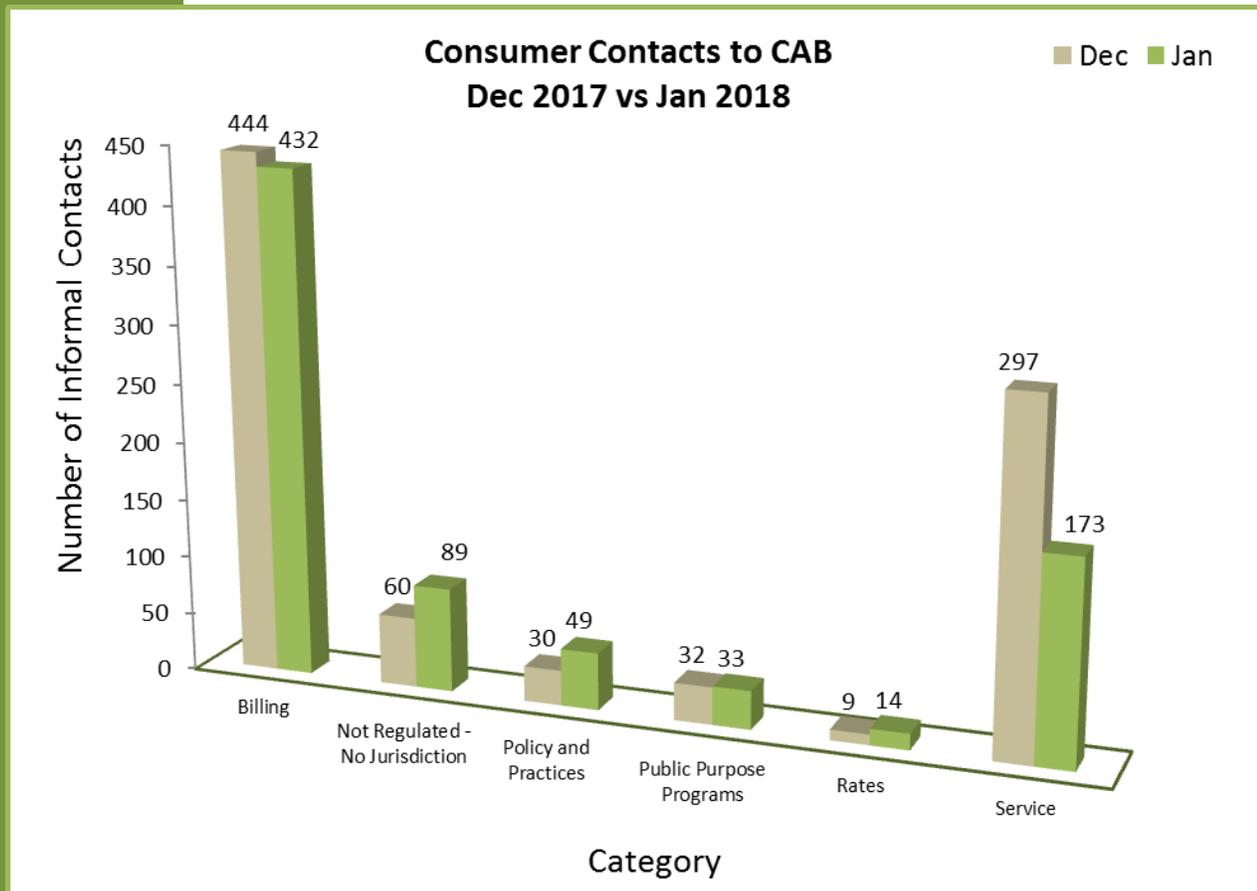
Lifeline contacts increased 30% in total, with the key driver amongst several factors being an increase in “Identity Verification” appeals.

Service contacts increased 63% due to outage related contacts from AT&T customers.

In addition to the 975 categorized contacts, CAB received 195 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

# Energy

790 CONTACTS (January 2018)



In January 2018, CAB received 790 Energy-related informal contacts allocated amongst the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service.

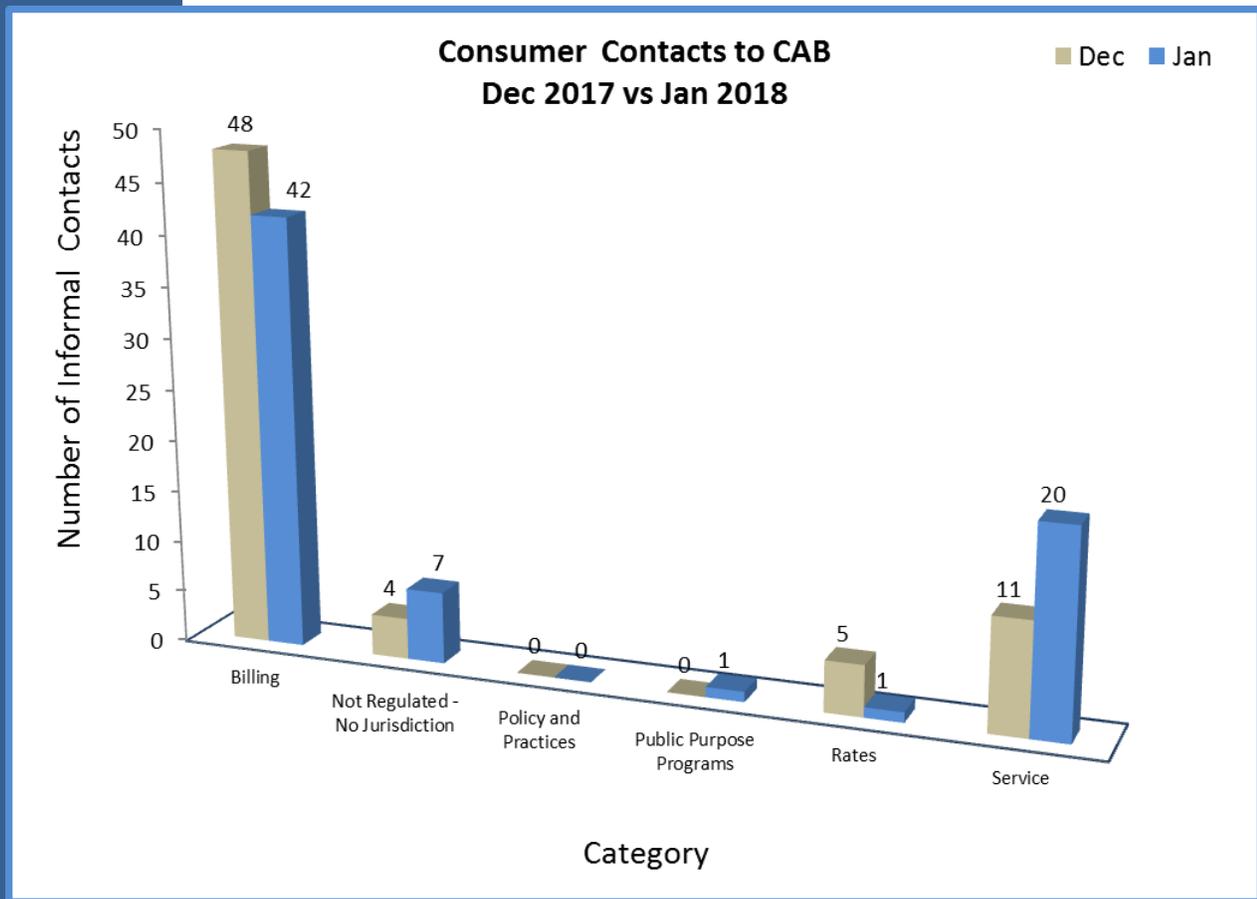
There is a 42% drop in service contacts in January. Although a significant change, there are no specific events that can be attributed to the drop in service contacts.

In addition to the 790 categorized contacts, CAB also received 112 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.



# Water

71 CONTACTS (January 2018)



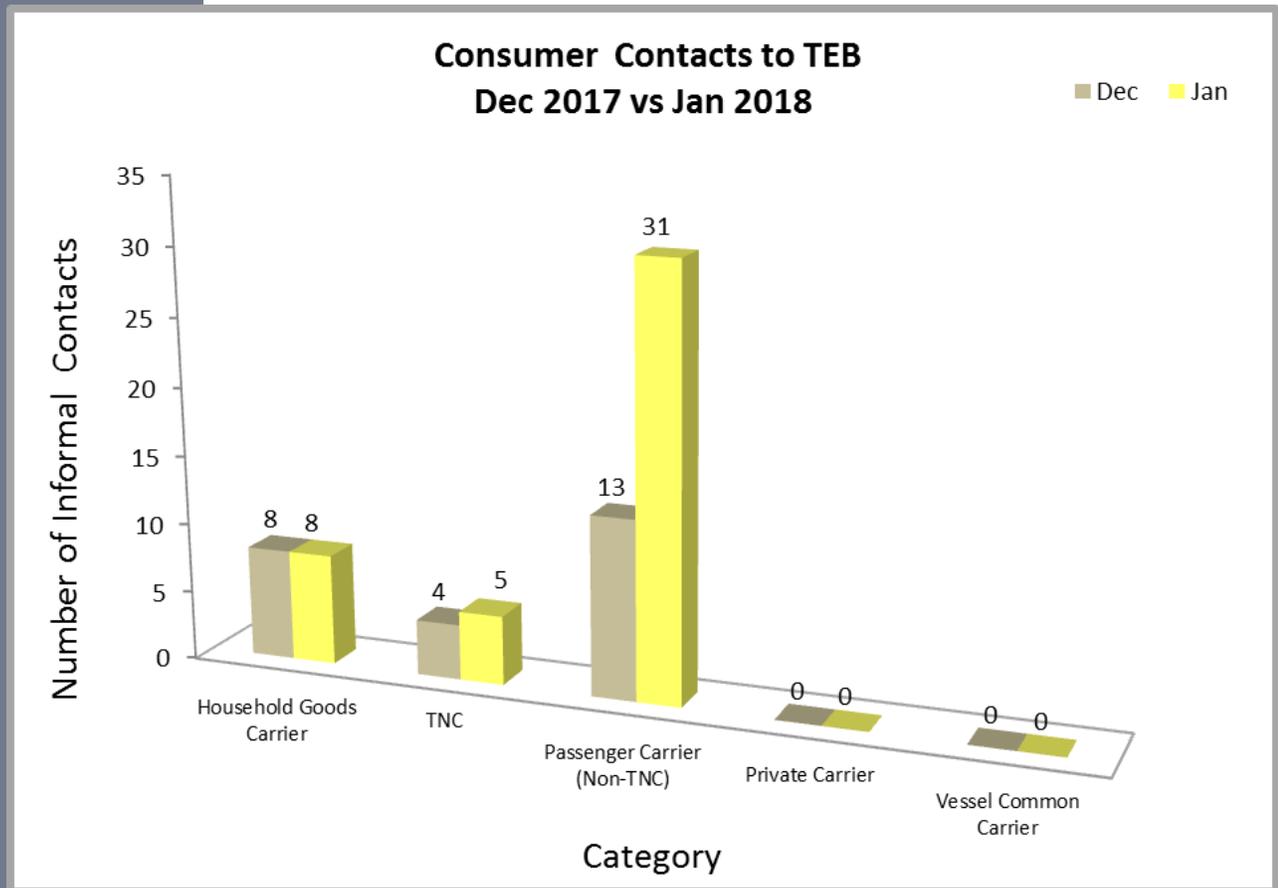
CAB received 71 Water-related informal contacts in January 2018, allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service.

Although there is a noticeable increase in Service category of water contacts this month, CAB analysis determined that there is no singular event or company that can be attributed to the increase in Service-related contacts.

In addition to the 71 categorized contacts, CAB received 43 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

# Transportation

44 CONTACTS (January 2018)



TEB received a total of 44 transportation complaints in January 2018, allocated into one of the five defined categories of Household Goods Carrier, TNC, Passenger Carrier (Non-TNC), Private Carrier, or Vessel Common Carrier.

Complaints against Passenger Carriers increased significantly due to Staff outreach in the Central Valley and San Bernardino region, which resulted in eight complaints referred directly to investigators working in those areas.

# Safety Concerns Across Industries

During January 2018, CPED received **62** safety-related contacts identified as having a safety concern component across the four reported industries. The contacts presented below are a subset of those presented on pages 3-6 of this report. Safety contacts are classified by the type of safety concern.

<b>Communications</b>	<b>12</b>
Company Practice	1
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	5
Property Restoration	1
Utility Infrastructure	5

<b>Energy</b>	<b>23</b>
Company Practice	2
Consumer Property	1
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	1
Gas Leak	3
Property Restoration	3
Utility Infrastructure	13

<b>Water</b>	
No safety contacts	

<b>Transportation</b>	<b>27</b>
Operating Without Active Authority	27

## Definitions for Safety-Related Contacts:

**Company Practice** includes service-related issues perceived to impact consumer safety such as lengthy appointment wait times for service restoration.

**Consumer Property** includes issues with consumer owned property such as unsafe appliances (heaters, stoves, etc.)

**EMF/Power Surges/Voltage fluctuations** include cases related to Electromagnetic Field (EMF) concerns (e.g. Smart Meters), consumer household power surges and electricity voltage fluctuations.

**Emergency Services/ Health Concerns** include immediate or perceived concerns due to potential outages or events, such as inability to reach 911 during phone outage, or failure of medical equipment during power outages.

**Gas Leak** includes any concerns related to gas leaks in the utility distribution system or in the consumer's premises.

**Operating Without Active Authority** involves operations without a valid permit or certificate, including operations with a suspended or revoked permit or certificate.

**Property Restoration** includes issues regarding ground hazards such as holes, trenches, tripping hazards, debris removal, tree trimming and street lighting.

**Security Concerns** includes issues perceived to impact consumer security such as phone line privacy issues, unlisted phone numbers, or utility personnel identification.

**Utility Infrastructure** includes issues regarding infrastructure that is faulty or in disrepair such as hanging cables, exposed wires, leaning utility poles, analog meters and transformers.

**Water Safety or Quality** includes immediate or perceived concerns relating to water quality such as color, odor or presence of chemicals in drinking water.

# Definitions

## Consumer Affairs Branch

The following definitions were compiled to assist with understanding consumer contacts information.

Type of Contacts Definitions	
Informal Consumer Contacts	Informal Contacts are consumers' communications received by CAB via phone calls, letters and electronic submissions (email/web form). Contacts can consist of complaints, questions, or feedback from consumers regarding the policies and practices of specific utilities or the CPUC. These contacts are reported as Categorized or Uncategorized.
Categorized Contacts	These are informal contacts which have sufficient information to be allocated into one the defined categories: Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, and Service based on the primary (overarching) reason for the contact.
Uncategorized Contacts	These are contacts which are pending assignment, lack sufficient information to be processed (Unknown), or contacts in which the consumer intended to contact some other entity, and mistakenly contacted CAB (Misdirected).

Category Definitions	
Billing	Consumer contacts related to disputed items appearing on a consumer's utility bill, the appearance of the bill, or other utility charges.
Lifeline (Billing & Appeals)	Consumer contacts related to the Lifeline Program, which assists low income telecommunications customers. It includes items related to Lifeline Appeals or Lifeline Billing disputes.
Not Regulated – No Jurisdiction	Consumer contacts related to concerns, disputes, and issues where the CPUC does not have jurisdiction.
Policy and Practices	Consumer contacts related to utility and/or CPUC policies and practices.
Public Purpose Programs	Consumer contacts related to programs that assist utility consumers, including income-based and disability-based programs.
Rates	Consumer contacts related to rate design, rate protests and baseline rates.
Service	Consumer contacts related to the service provided to the consumer by the utility.
Uncategorized Definitions	
Misdirected	Consumer contacts intended for some other entity such as consumer attempting to contact their utility. CAB assists these consumers by redirecting them to the entity best able to address their concerns.
Pending Assignment	Category not identified due to case pending processing.
Unknown	Category not identified due to lack of information from consumer.